

# LEAVE ISSUE OF SAME-SEX MARRIAGE TO THE STATES

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak out of order for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Connecticut is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, today we debated a constitutional amendment drafted not to protect my marriage or my family, I see no reasonable way to argue it would, but rather to explicitly deny a portion of our society the right to marry and the benefits that accompany that kind of partnership.

I do not advocate the legalization of gay marriage, but our Constitution is simply not the proper place to set this kind of social policy. I believed back in 1996 when I voted for the Defense of Marriage Act and I still believe today the decision about whether to recognize gay marriage should be left to the States.

I can't help but wonder why we are doing this. What are we so afraid of? Gay men and women pass through our lives every day. They are wonderful teachers and leaders and role models who happen to be gay, and sometimes we don't even know they are gay. There are brave men and women buried in Arlington National Cemetery who happen to be gay.

I wouldn't be a Member of Congress today if it weren't for an extraordinary teacher I had in high school 40 years ago. I learned years later he was gay and that he had to commute from Connecticut to Washington, D.C. to be with his partner every weekend, in part to protect his privacy and his job.

When I went to college, my understanding of gay people was impacted again by my wife's best friend. One day she told us that she, too, like my wife and I, had found the love of her life. We were eager to meet the boyfriend she was so madly in love with. But we soon learned her love was not a he, but a she. Once we got over our surprise and our ways of thinking about relationships, we were able to sincerely rejoice in the joy they brought each other because we knew what a dear and good person our friend is.

My perception of gay people evolved further during my first campaign for Congress when I worked with a magnificent young man named Carl Brown. He became my friend, and he gave me another gay face to know. Carl has since passed away from AIDS, but I remember him as a person of exceptional dignity and grace.

My teacher, my wife's best friend, and Carl helped me understand their lives and I think made me a better person in the process.

The Constitution of the United States, which established our government, grants us free speech and gives all citizens the right to vote, should not be dishonored by this effort to write in discrimination. I am clearly sensitive to some of my colleagues'

concerns about potential biblical and social implications of legalized same-sex marriage, but I oppose this proposed amendment because I believe the Constitution is not the proper instrument to set or reject such policy. That debate should happen in our State legislatures.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

## AMERICAN NEEDS A NEW DIRECTION TO COMBAT TERRORISM

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight because I believe that America needs a new direction to secure our country and combat terrorism. We need a new direction so our children and our children's children will live in a safer and more secure world.

On May 1, 2003, President Bush declared that Iraq is free, that major combat operations in Iraq have ended. Yet in more than 3 years since, our world has not become a safer place, and our military families continue to suffer. More than 130,000 U.S. troops are serving in Iraq and more than 10,500 members of the selected Reserves have been deployed more than three times. Ninety-seven percent of the National Guard combat and special operations battalions have been mobilized since September 11, 2001, and the average tour of duty for National Guard members is 342 days.

□ 1945

Two thousand five hundred fifty-three of our men and women have paid the ultimate price. That includes 11 members that I represent from East Los Angeles and the San Gabriel Valley: Private First Class Jose Casanova, age 23. Lance Corporal Manuel Ceniceors, age 23. Lance Corporal Francisco Martinez Flores, age 21. Sergeant First Class Kelly Bolor, age 38. Lance Corporal Benjamin Gonzalez, age 23. Corporal Jorge Gonzalez, age 20. Sergeant Atanacio Haro-Marin, age 27. Specialist Leroy Harris-Kelly, III, age 20. Corporal Stephen Johnson, age 24. Corporal Rudy Salas, age 20. And, lastly, Marine Corporal Carlos Arellano, age 22.

Another 10,327 have been injured, not including more than 8,500 who have been injured so badly that they cannot return to action. I strongly support our servicemen and women that have performed admirably under these very difficult conditions. These conditions

have been worsened by the lack of needed supplies, and our men and women continue to serve without a plan to secure the peace.

Today, the Government Accountability Office testified that Congress had appropriated \$430 billion to the Department of Defense for the global war on terror. According to the GAO, and I quote: "Neither the DOD nor the Congress reliably know how much the war is costing Americans."

The GAO also testified that the U.S. can expect to incur significant costs for an unspecified time in the future, requiring decision-makers to consider difficult trade-offs. As the Nation faces increasing long-range fiscal challenges, we have seen some of the trade-offs already.

Critical programs remain unfunded and underfunded by this administration, and our veterans and their families are the ones that are suffering. There are \$3 billion worth of gaps in needed services for our Nation's veterans. The number of new veterans waiting for health care appointments at the VA, the Veterans Administration, has risen by 400 percent over the last 2 years.

Funding for Homeland Security is suffering too. And as a result, because of the administration's misguided policies, first responder grants have been slashed by 59 percent, and only 5 percent of containers entering the U.S. ports are screened, and there are 800 fewer border patrol agents than what was authorized in the 9/11 Commission Act.

Afghanistan is also suffering from the Bush administration's misguided policies. Secretary Rumsfeld wrote in a letter today that the United States maintains its strong commitment to Afghan's success. We look forward to continuing our strong partnership, he said.

Yet the people in Afghanistan are not feeling that commitment. Between November 2003 and April 2006, the number of insurgents has quadrupled from 5,000 to 20,000. The average number of daily attacks by insurgents has climbed by more than 70.

The Afghan Defense Minister recently stated that Afghanistan needs five times the number of security forces to address the issue of a resurgent Taliban. And without them, Afghanistan is in real danger of collapse. If his warnings were not enough, just today the Taliban recaptured two towns in the southern province of Pakistan's border.

Despite the increasing conflict in Afghanistan, despite the lack of a plan for peace in Iraq, despite the lack of accountability for government contracts, and despite the trade-offs on homeland security, important first responder programs, the administration wants the United States to stay the course.

I could not disagree more. War and military might alone does not show strength in foreign policy rooted in a

unilateral and preemptive action which does not achieve peace for Americans. America needs a new direction

Mr. Speaker, we must seize the moment and insist on a new direction for America so our children and our children's children will live in a safer and more secure environment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WESTMORELAND). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Dakota (Ms. HERSETH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. HERSETH addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### VIOLENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, today, again, the newspapers of our country tell the story of more organized killings, more death, more carnage, more bombings, more escalating violence in the Middle East.

There are photos in this newspaper of fathers and relatives crying in Lebanon, and below it, young people crying in Haifa, in Israel. We all read these stories and we say, why cannot the killing stop? I as just one Member of this Congress am very proud to represent a community that knows what it will take for the killing to stop.

Toledo, Ohio, in fact, was the first community in the United States of America to elect a mayor who was of American Lebanese heritage, Michael Damas, who is no longer living. You know, I am so proud of the people of my community.

Today they came to our office in Toledo and they said, Congresswoman, we have a statement that we would like you to consider. And I thought it was so thoughtful and even-handed that I wanted to read it to the American people tonight. They asked, of course, that Americans who are in Lebanon be removed safely, and they asked us to urge the President of our country to move them out quickly.

But then they wrote, "We the American Lebanese Descent Community of Toledo request that the war and the bombing be suspended and our U.S. Government pursue peace and save lives in the region: Americans, Israelis, Palestinians, Lebanese and others. It is a simple statement. But I think it is a much more judicious statement than the President of our country made as part of the G-8 summit the other day

when using a vulgarity. The President said at one point that Syria should get Hezbollah to stop its attacks on Israel.

His statement was not even-handed, it was not comprehensive, it did not talk about peace, it did not recognize the legitimate interests of the people of this country, the people of Israel, the people of Lebanon, the people of a future Palestinian.

His statement did not talk about limiting carnage, and the retribution that characterizes the deteriorating situation in Lebanon and in adjoining countries. I am very proud of the people of the greater Toledo area for understanding what it is going to take to create peace and to initiate peace.

I am very proud to sponsor today as well, a resolution submitted by Congressman KUCINICH of Cleveland that reads as follows. It calls upon our President to appeal to all sides in the current crisis in the Middle East for an immediate cessation of violence and to commit the United States and our diplomats to multiparty negotiations with no preconditions.

And it calls upon the President to appeal to all of those sides, as the people in my community have done, for an immediate cessation of violence. Would it have not been great if President Bush, like President Reagan had done with Menachem Began when he served as Prime Minister of Israel, and asked for an immediate cessation of violence? That did not happen with President Bush.

This resolution of Mr. KUCINICH would commit the United States and our diplomatic efforts to multiparty negotiations without precondition. It would send high-level diplomatic missions to the region to facilitate such multiparty negotiations, and would include representatives from the Governments of Israel, Lebanon, Iran, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, the Palestinian Authority and it would support an international peacekeeping mission to southern Lebanon to prevent cross-border skirmishes during such multiparty negotiations.

Does that not sound like a much healthier way for the world to move? There will be many resolutions offered here this week. And I ask myself, will they be as judicious as the people of our community? Will they be as full-bodied? Will they be as even-handed? Will they have a peace process envisioned at the end of this horrible, horrible road?

Will they recognize the legitimate interests of all parties concerned? And will they seek to limit carnage, or will those resolutions continue to engender hate and further retribution?

Mr. Speaker, this is a critical time for the world, not just for our country, but for so many fragile nations who really need the time to heal and the time to let democracy develop.

Mr. Speaker, I hope, with those peace-loving people of our community that peace is just ahead.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SOUDER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WELDON of Florida addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. McDERMOTT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JINDAL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JINDAL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GILCHREST addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BERRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. OWENS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)